

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 PRS-01 SSO-00 INRE-00 USIE-00

NSCE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 AID-05 OMB-01 /056 W

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FM AMEMBAUSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9519

UNCLAS PHNOM PENH 3516

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TAGS: PINT, PINS, EAID, MASS, PFOR, CB, US, SOPN

SUBJ: TV STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR

REF: (A) PHNOM PENH 3456 (B) STATE 042850

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF STATEMENT DELIVERED EXTEMPORANEOUSLY BY AMBASSADOR TO ENTIRE FOREIGN MEDIA CORPS AT 1720 HOURS FEBRUARY 26, PRIMARILY FOR BENEFIT OF TV AND RADIO CORRESPONDENTS, THOUGH NEWSPAPER AND AGENCY CORRESPONDENTS WERE ALSO PRESENT. QUOTE.

THE MILITARY SITUATION IN PHNOM PENH IS GRIM BUT IT IS NOT DESPERATE. EVERY YEAR AROUND THIS TIME, WHICH IN CAMBODIA IS THE DRY SEASON, THE ENEMY LAUNCHES A MAJOR OFFENSIVE. COMPARED TO LAST YEAR'S WARFARE, THE CAMBODIAN FORCES HERE HAVE DONE A BETTER JOB IN PROTECTING THE DEFENSIVE PERIMETER OF THE CAPITAL OF PHNOM PENH. BUT THIS YEAR THE ADVERSARY IS TRYING A NEW STRATEGY DESIGNED TO CUT THE TWO LIFELINES TO THIS NATION BY ROCKETING AND SHELLING THE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT HERE IN PHNOM PENH AND PREVENTING PLANES FROM LANDING AND BY INTERDICTING THE MEKONG RIVER TO NAVIGATION BY SEEDING THE RIVER WITH MINES AND BY USING HEAVY WEAPONS TO SHOOT FROM

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THE BANKS OF THE MEKONG ON THE CONVOYS. AS

YOU KNOW, THE AIRPORT AT PHNOM PENH REMAINS OPEN
DESPITE THE DAILY ROCKETING, BUT NO CONVOYS HAVE
COME UP THE MEKONG DURING THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY. WE
HOPE THAT THE CAMBODIAN MILITARY WILL FIND A WAY

TO SOLVE THESE TWO PROBLEMS. IN THE MEANTIME WE,
WE AMERICANS I MEAN, ARE BRINGING IN BY AIR NEEDED
AMMUNITION FOR THE CAMBODIAN MILITARY TO DEFEND
THEMSELVES AND TOMORROW BRINGING IN RICE AND
PETROLEUM BY AIR FOR THE CIVILIANS AND FOR THE
REFUGEES WHO HAVE SUFFERED SO MUCH IN THIS WAR.
IT APPEARS TO US THAT THE CAMBODIANS ARE DETERMINED
TO DEFEND THEMSELVES, BUT FOR THIS THEY NEED THE
WHEREWITHAL AND THERE IS NO ONE ELSE TO PROVIDE IT.
THEY ARE DETERMINED TO DEFEND THEMSELVES MILITARILY
BUT ALSO I WOULD LIKE TO PARTICULARLY STRESS THE
DETERMINATION, WHICH ALL OF YOU HAVE KNOWN AND KNOW,
OF TRYING TO FIND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS.

YOU ALL KNOW THE EFFORTS MADE BY THE AUTHORITIES IN
PHNOM PENH TO FIND A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT CALLING
FOR UNCONDITIONAL NEGOTIATIONS, NEGOTIATING WITH
ANYBODY ANY TIME. IN THE MEANTIME THE CAMBODIANS
NEED THE MEANS TO FIGHT AND UNFORTUNATELY THE FUNDS
WHICH HAVE BEEN MADE AVAILABLE SO FAR HAVE RUN OUT
AND SUPPLIES WHICH ARE PRESENTLY ON THEIR WAY OVER
HERE WILL BE USED UP IN A FEW WEEKS. THAT IS WHY
THE ADMINISTRATION IN WASHINGTON, LED BY THE PRESI-
DENT HIMSELF, HAS ASKED THE AMERICAN CONGRESS TO
GIVE ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR CAMBODIA. LET THERE
BE NO DOUBT IN ANYBODY'S MIND THAT IF THESE FUNDS
ARE NOT FORTHCOMING, THE CAMBODIANS HERE WOULD NOT
BE ABLE TO CONTINUE THEIR STRUGGLE. NOT BECAUSE
THEY DESPAIR, NOT BECAUSE THEY LACK THE WILL.
BECAUSE WE AMERICANS WILL DEPRIVE THEM OF THE MEANS
TO CONTINUE.

I WOULD LIKE TO SAY THAT I WOULD HOPE THAT THE
AMERICAN PEOPLE WILL NOT DEPRIVE THE CAMBODIANS
OF THEIR
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CHANCE TO TRY TO FIND A POLITICAL COM-
PROMISE SOLUTION WHICH WOULD END THE SUFFERING
FOR ALL KHMERS.
END QUOTE.
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